ECMT-USDOT WORKSHOP ON
FOSTERING SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION
OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRAVEL POLICIES

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The GRTA Story:
Georgia Regional Transportation Authority

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What is GRTA?

Created in 1999 to provide the citizens of Georgia with transportation choices, improved air quality, and better land use in order to enhance their quality of life and promote growth that can be sustained by future generations.
General Powers

• May plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain public transportation systems, other land transportation projects, and air quality control installations within its jurisdiction

• Jurisdiction: EPA-designated ozone, carbon monoxide and particulate matter nonattainment areas
General Powers

• May adopt a regional plan
• May acquire property by eminent domain
• May control or limit access to or from any state or locally controlled road
• May deny certain state and Federal funds to non-cooperating local governments
Powers of Review

• May review proposed Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) and negotiate changes
• May approve or disapprove a TIP or remand it for modifications
• Annual Air Quality Report to Governor
• Review Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs)
• Coordinates state planning through its other designation as the Governor’s Development Council (GDC).
Financing

• May receive funding from
  – Georgia Legislature
  – Federal government
  – Private sector

• May receive Federal funds for
  – Transit
  – Air pollution control

• May issue up to $1 billion in revenue bonds and $1 billion in guaranteed revenue bonds
Why Was GRTA Created?

- Transportation conformity lapse began in Atlanta in January 1998
- Metropolitan Atlanta Transportation Initiative (MATI) report in December 1998 recommended its creation
Current Initiatives

- Transportation Choices Initiative
- Regional Transit Action Plan
- Fall Line Air Quality Study
- Atlanta Suburban Counties Study
- GA400/Northern Sub-Area Study
- Annual Air Quality Report
- Heavy-Duty Vehicle Inventory and Emissions Study
- DRI Air Quality Task Force
- Performance Measures
- GRTA-EPD-GDOT Monthly Meetings
Transportation Choices Initiative

- Regional Express Bus
- Commuter Bus
- Commuter Rail
- Regional Vanpool Program
- Northwest Corridor Transit Line
- Activity Center Circulator Systems
- Arterial Roadway Improvements
Regional Transit Action Plan

• Blueprint for implementing public transit facilities and services throughout the region
• Identify need for various types of public transit
• Create a comprehensive plan with specific actions to implement short-range (2010) and long-range (2025-2030) transit system improvements
Fall Line Air Quality Study

- Assess urban and regional air pollution in Augusta, Macon, and Columbus metropolitan areas. These could soon be designated as non-attainment areas.
- Identify the sources of pollutants and pollutant precursors
- Recommend solutions to poor air quality
Atlanta Suburban Counties Study

• Develop Transportation Plans and TIPs for five counties outside of MPO but within current or potential future nonattainment area

• Develop an on-going planning process

• Develop procedures to guide future GDOT actions when a county is designated as nonattainment
Georgia 400/Northern Sub-Area Study

- 22-month study to evaluate transportation, land use and air quality issues in northern metropolitan Atlanta where explosive growth is taking place
- Provide recommendations for the 2004-2006 Transportation Improvement Program and the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Development Plan updates
Annual Air Quality Report

- Provides background on air quality issues in Atlanta region
- Presents measures and targets to track regional progress in improving air quality
- Describes air quality initiatives in Atlanta region
DRI Air Quality Task Force

- Cosponsored by GRTA and ARC
- Develop air quality component of DRI review
  - analysis methodology
  - review criteria
- Transportation and non-transportation-related emissions
Performance Measures

Program evaluation tool that measures progress in improving air quality, mobility and accessibility, and land use throughout the region. This is an ongoing process.
GRTA-EPD-GDOT Monthly Meetings

Monthly staff-level meetings to coordinate, plan, and leverage expertise and resources for air quality planning efforts.

Close coordination required between all state and federal agencies.
Project Illustrations
The Authority

15-member GRTA board appointed by the governor. It also functions as the Governor’s Development Council (GDC) to coordinate state planning.

15-member board represents public and private interests.
Arterial Road Improvements

Building and improving:
- Arterial roads
- Park and ride lots

Goal:
- Reduce traffic congestion
- Facilitate access to transit corridors
Northwest Corridor

Examines the best alternatives to improve transportation connections along the I-75 corridor
Northwest Corridor
Transit Line

Options: rail, bus
rapid transit, etc.

Connecting:
• Midtown
• Cumberland/
  Galleria
• Town Center
Commuter Bus & Rail

Option:
Buses & rail systems serving regional commuters

Connecting:
• Macon-to-Griffin-to-Atlanta
• Athens-to-Atlanta
• Canton-to-Atlanta
In March 2002, 11 of the 13 counties signed on for regional express bus service that will be implemented by 2003.

Counties include Forsyth, Gwinnett, Paulding, Cobb, Fulton, DeKalb, Douglas, Rockdale, Coweta, Clayton and Henry.
Regional Vanpool

Option: Public/private partnerships that create more vanpool options

Connecting:
- Origins and destinations with special time of day commute needs

GRTA’s goal is to support 300 new vanpools over the next 10 years
ACCESS Activity Center

Option:
Buses & other transportation alternatives

Connecting: Riders at major activity centers including:
• Town Center
• Perimeter
• Hartsfield Airport
• Downtown/Midtown
Setting the Pace for Regional Stewardship

- Atlantic Station Green Light Team
- Buckhead Transportation Management Association (BATMA)
- GRTA Citizens’ Academy
- Georgia Federal Transit Agenda
Setting the Pace for Regional Stewardship

- GRTA Air Quality Report
- GRTA Executive Director’s State & Regional Cabinet
- GRTA Performance Measures
- The Clean Air Campaign
Mapping The Future
Regional Transit Action Plan (RTAP)

Provides guidance for implementing various public transportation alternatives

RTAP held the “Metro Conference on Transit Possibilities” in May 2002
Mapping The Future
GA 400 Corridor Analysis/ Northern Sub Area Study (NSAS)

Two-part study that involves a comprehensive land-use and transportation plan
Regional Transit Action
Plan 2030 Transit Plan
Development